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James Fee

Photographs of America

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Item Barcode: RAPIDO-305000105

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James Fee: photographs of America
By: Fee, James

Imprint: Place of publication not identified publisher n

Location: Borrowing Rapido Requ

Destination: Copley Library

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FULLERTON, CA. 92634

James Fee : Photographs of America
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Library of Congress Catalogue Number:
ISBN 0-9640494-0-6

Catalogue Design
SoS Los Angeles / Susan Silton

Essay
Craig Krull

Color Separations
American Litho Impressions
Irwindale, California

Typesetting
Fontographics, Inc
Los Angeles, California

Printed in an edition of 1000 by
Bremik Press
Gardena, California

Photographs of America

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is a work in progress, an open-ended series of "poems" in the tradition of Walt Whitman. Like the poet, Fee regards his project as a life long engagement in the story of a civilization, presenting an overall picture to us in the form of residual moments rather than in the main events. According to Fee, the true account of a country is not told in the description of its battles, but in the "things in between...like the treatment of the survivors of a war."

America in Whitman's time represented, according to Lincoln, "the last best hope on Earth." Optimism had survived even the Civil War. Fee's America, on the other hand, is symbolized in the frustration of closed factories, the decay of inner cities, and the rusting of ships and obsolete machinery.

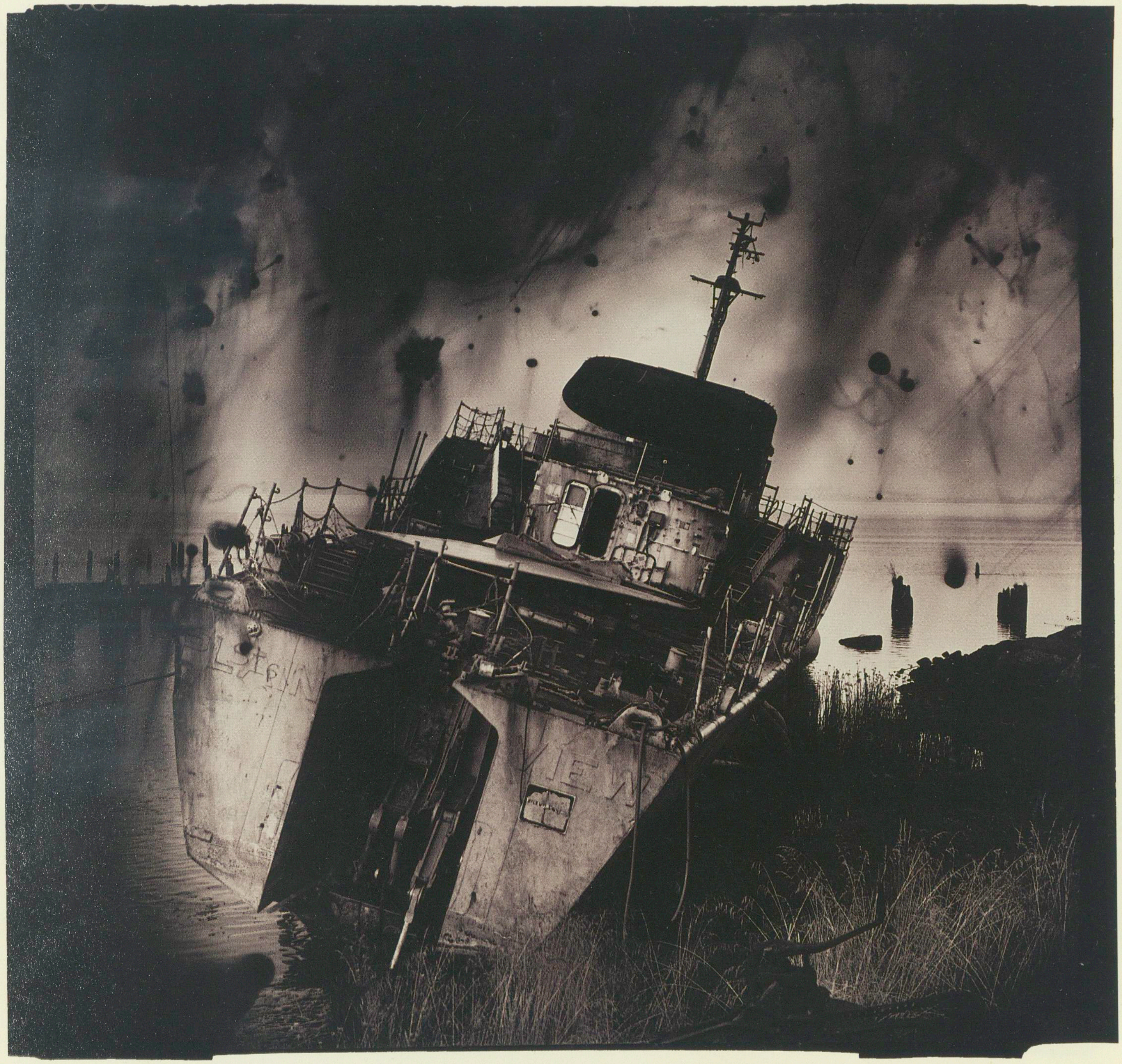
In **Photographs of America**, James Fee is an archaeologist, exposing the detritus of a monumental, yet seemingly moribund civilization. His photographs are often stained and foggy around the edges, suggesting that the prints themselves are aged and that the contemporary images depicted have already receded into history. A poetry of use and abandonment is suggested in these pictures of frozen metal parts that were once well oiled and dynamic. They are a "memento mori" of industrialism.

As the artist has stated, it is "the process of photographing change that excites me." Clearly, his photographs are a record of the rapid pace of change in America, change that has left behind a cumbersome physical legacy. Summarizing his work and the nature of progress is his photograph of the grand old Atlantic oceanliner, The United States, as it awaits demolition. Although the decaying ship seems to symbolize the slow decline of this nation, it is, in essence, only the massive remains of its evolution.

Craig Krull
Los Angeles, 1994

Untitled 036

Astoria, Oregon
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches


VIEW

Untitled 067

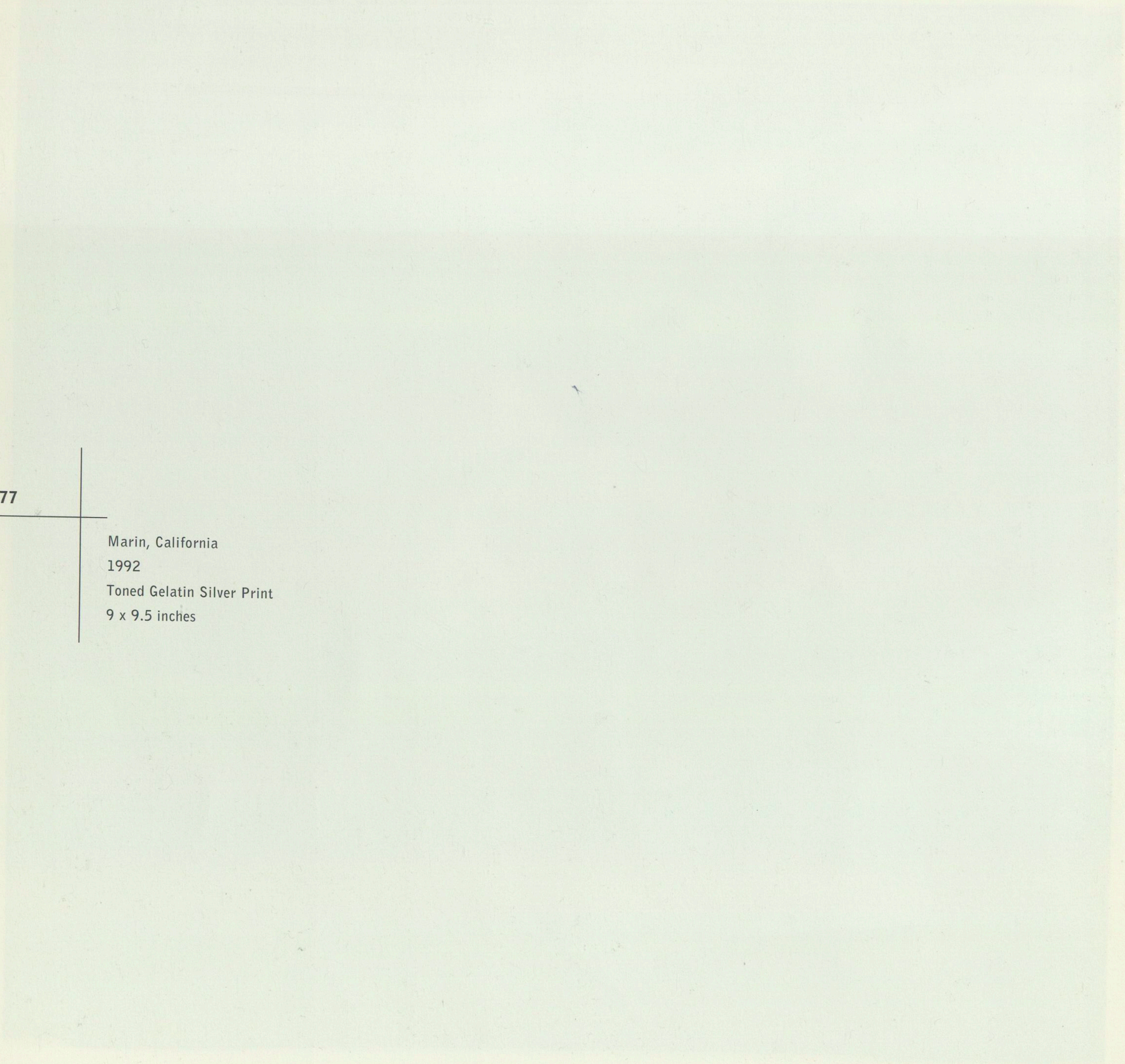
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

Untitled 031

Pt. Mugu, California
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

Untitled 057

Peoria, Illinois
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

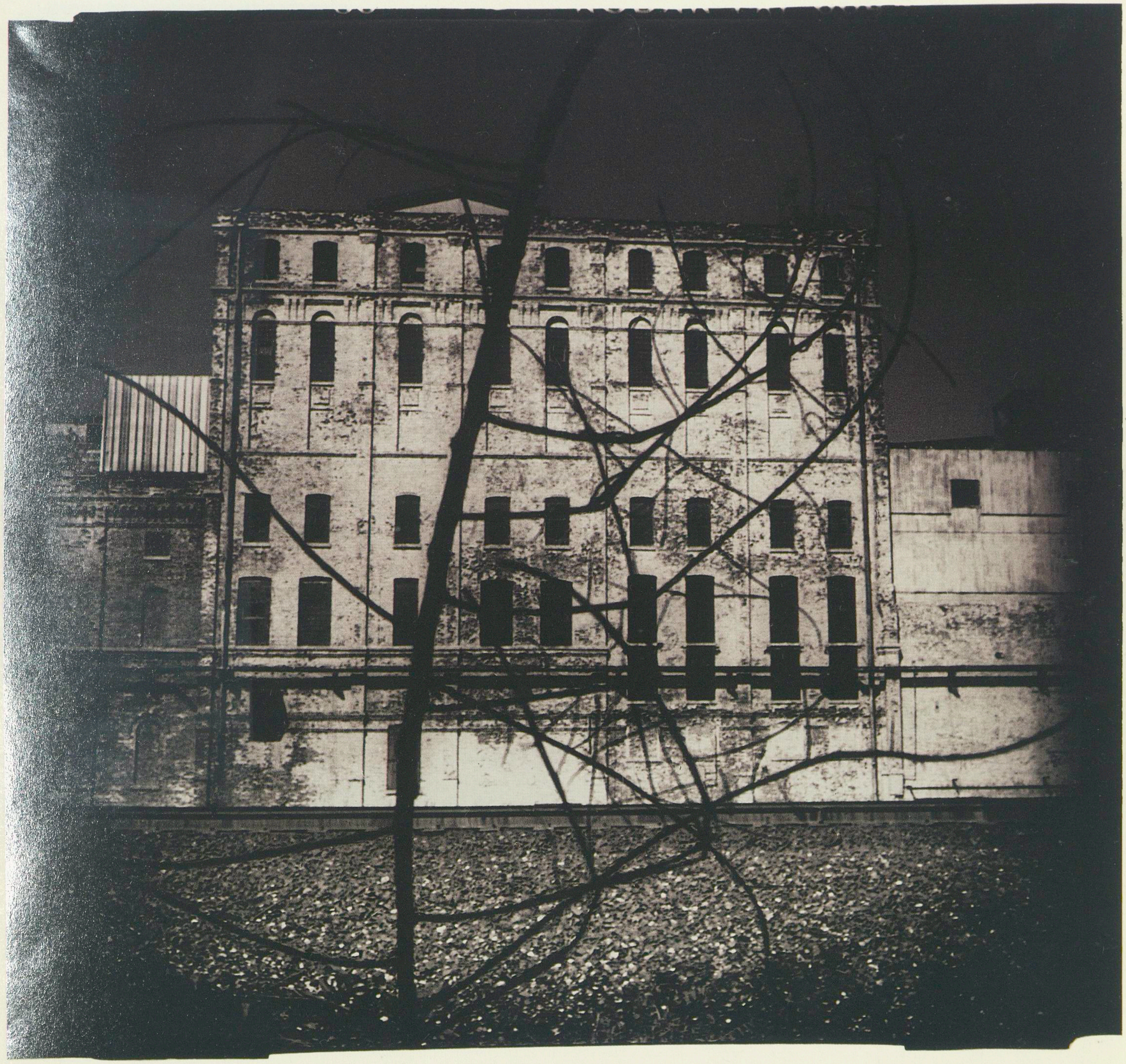


Untitled 077

Marin, California
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

Untitled LN03

East Chicago, Illinois
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

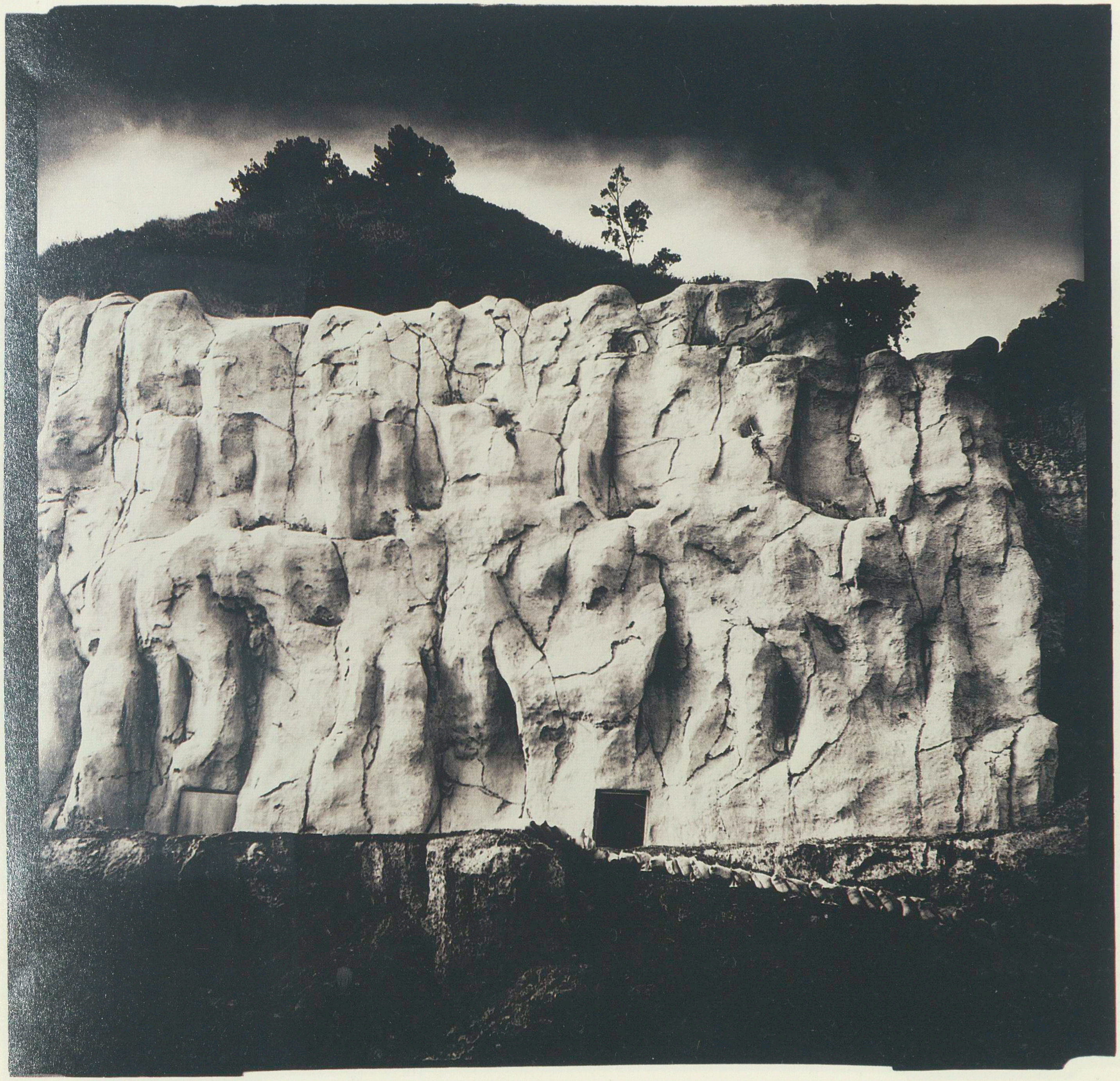


Untitled 1056

Richmond, Virginia
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

Untitled 001

Malibu, California
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches



Untitled 028

Chicago, Illinois
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

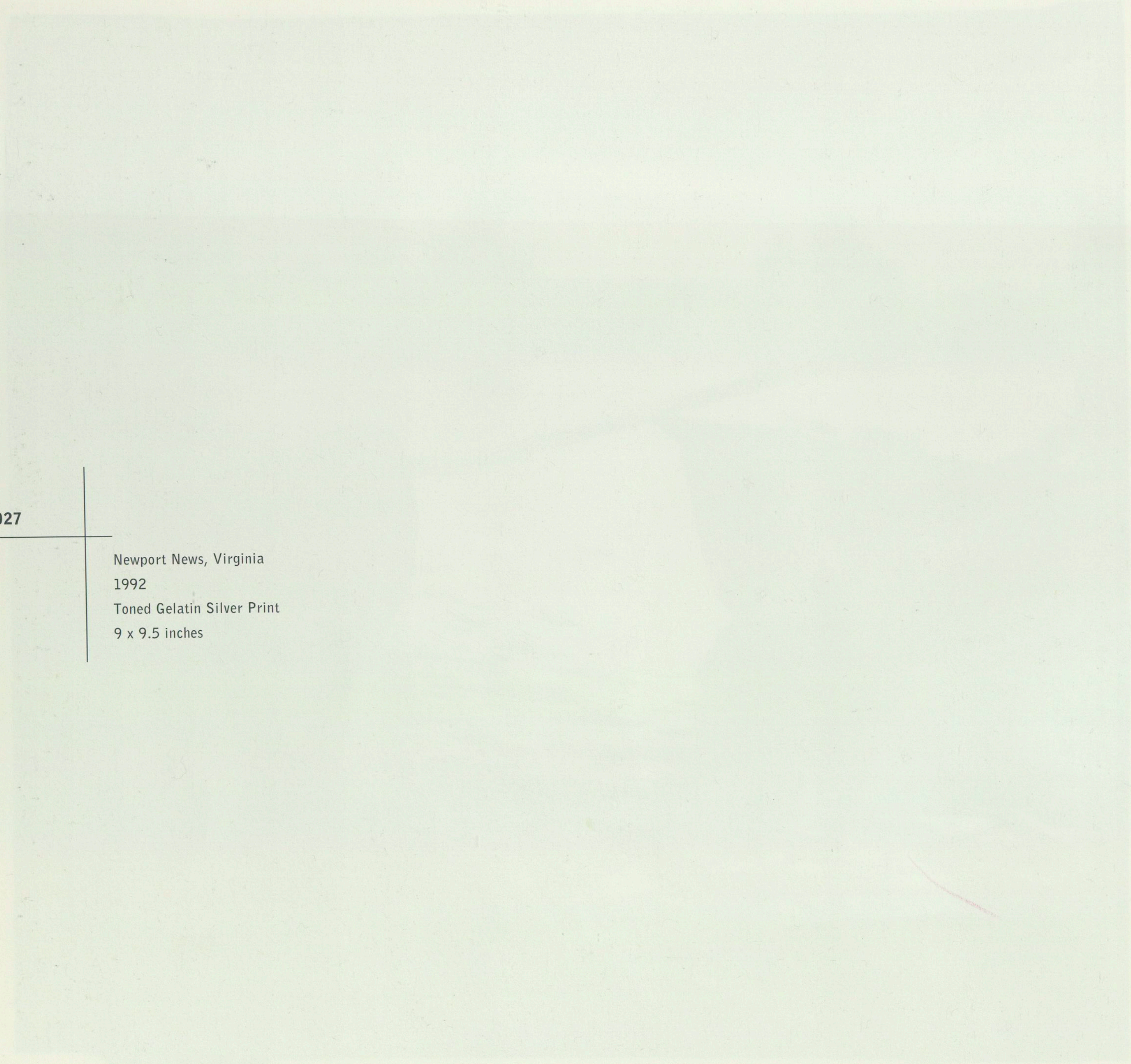
Untitled 039

Astoria, Oregon
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

Untitled LN02

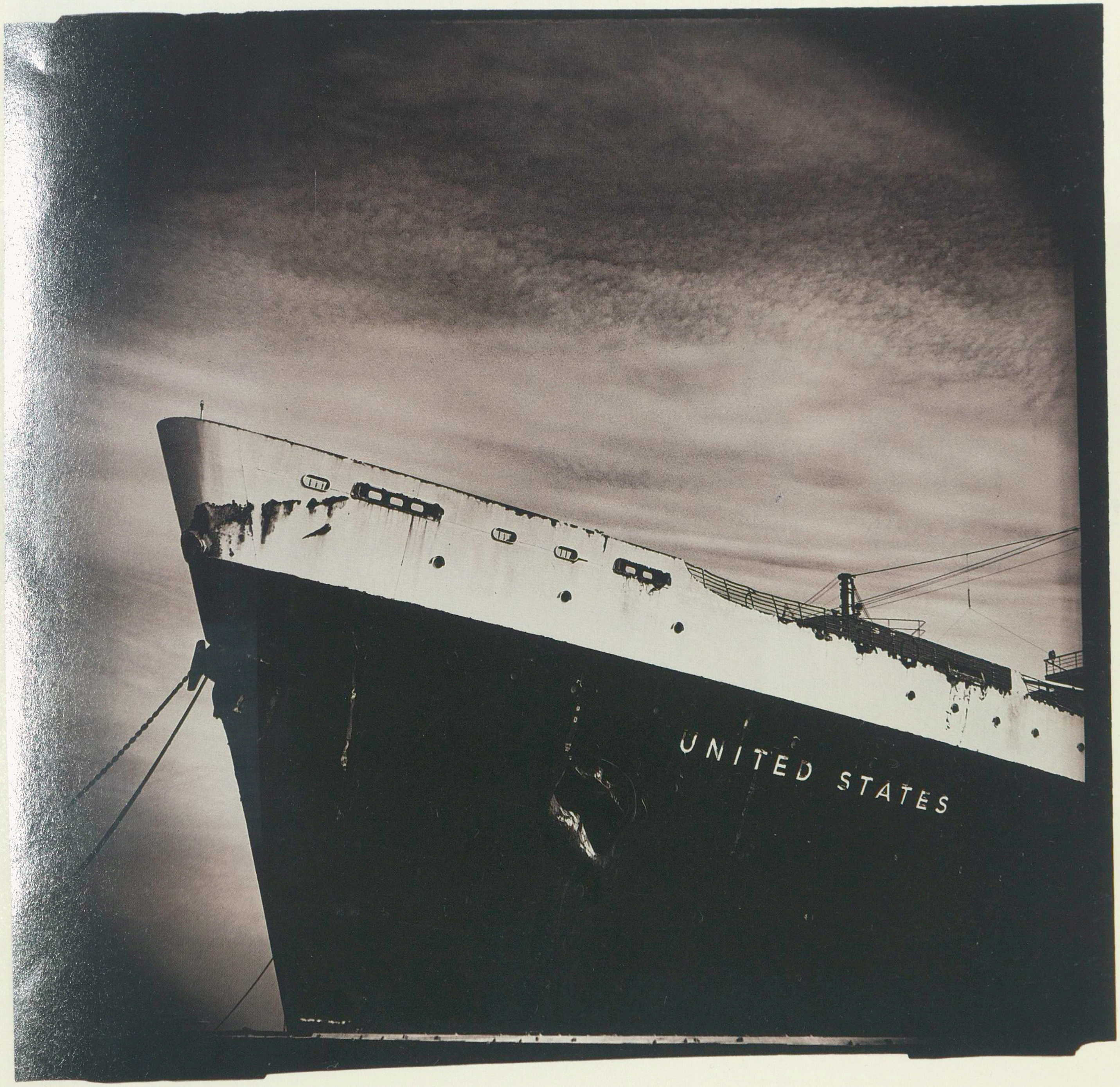
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

LIBRARY, CALIF. STATE UNIV. FULLERTON



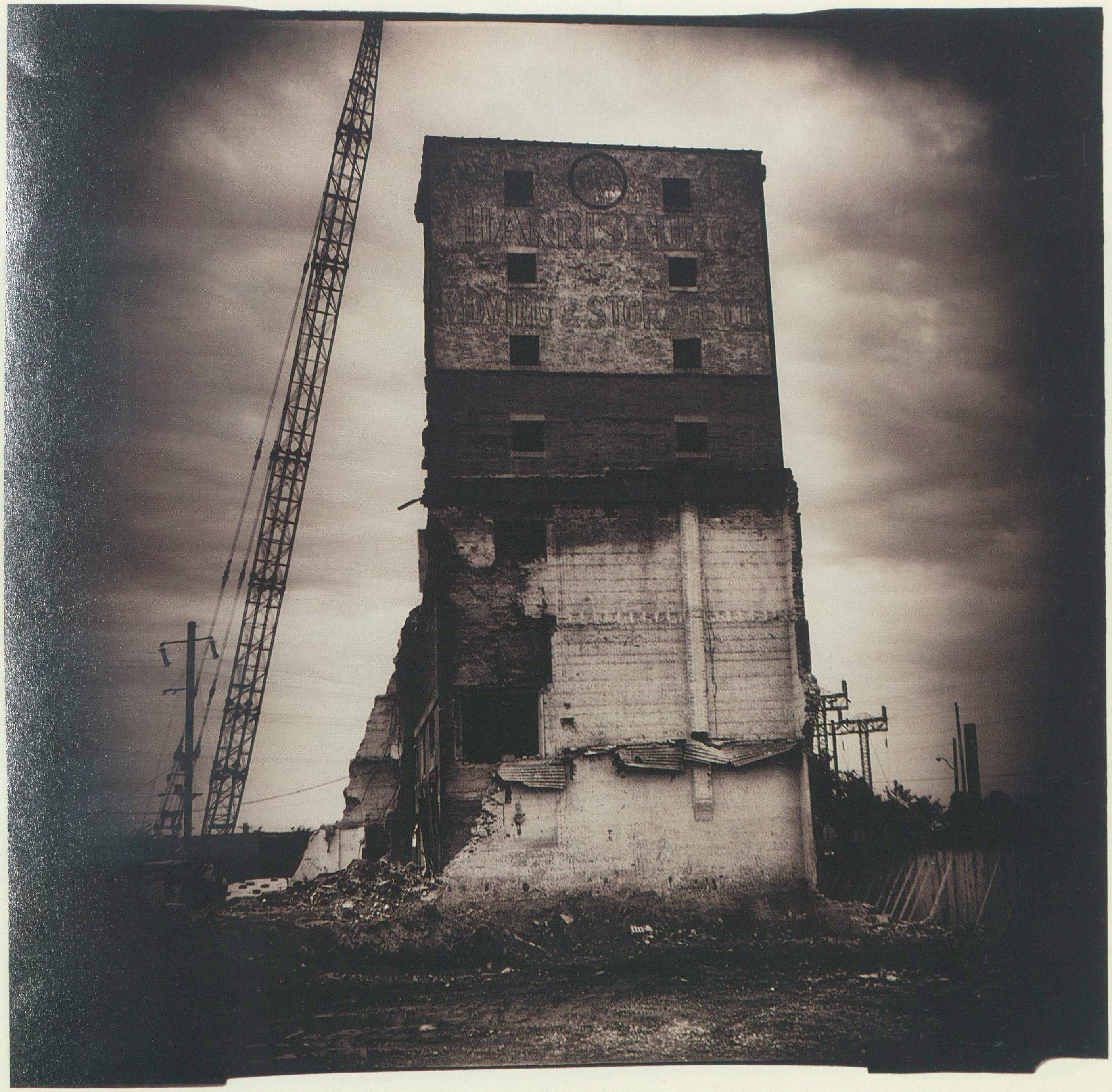
Untitled 027

Newport News, Virginia
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches


UNITED STATES

Untitled 040

Harrisburgh, Pennsylvania
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

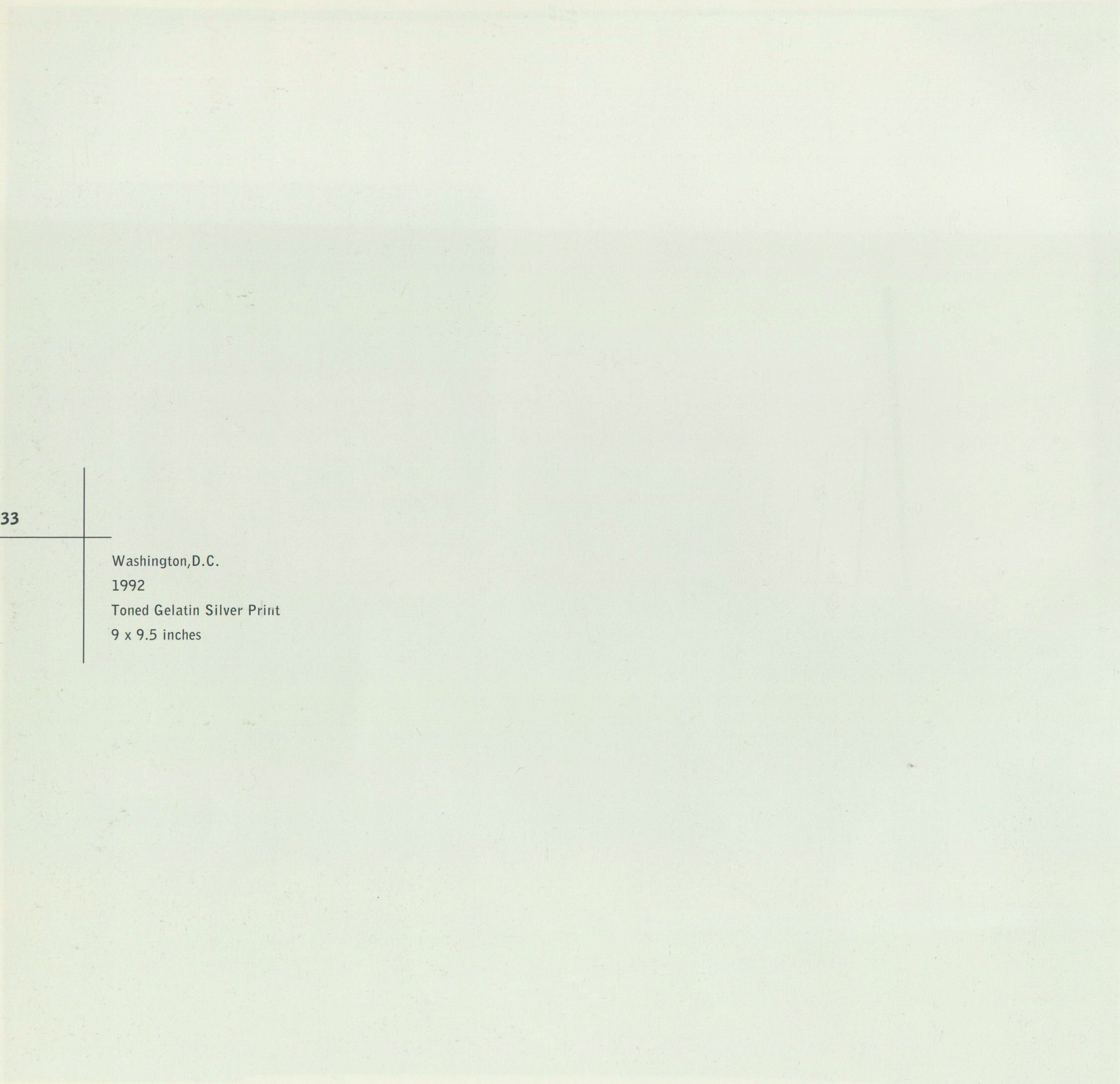

HARRISBURG
MOVING & STORAGE CO

Untitled 025

Pt. Mugu, California
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

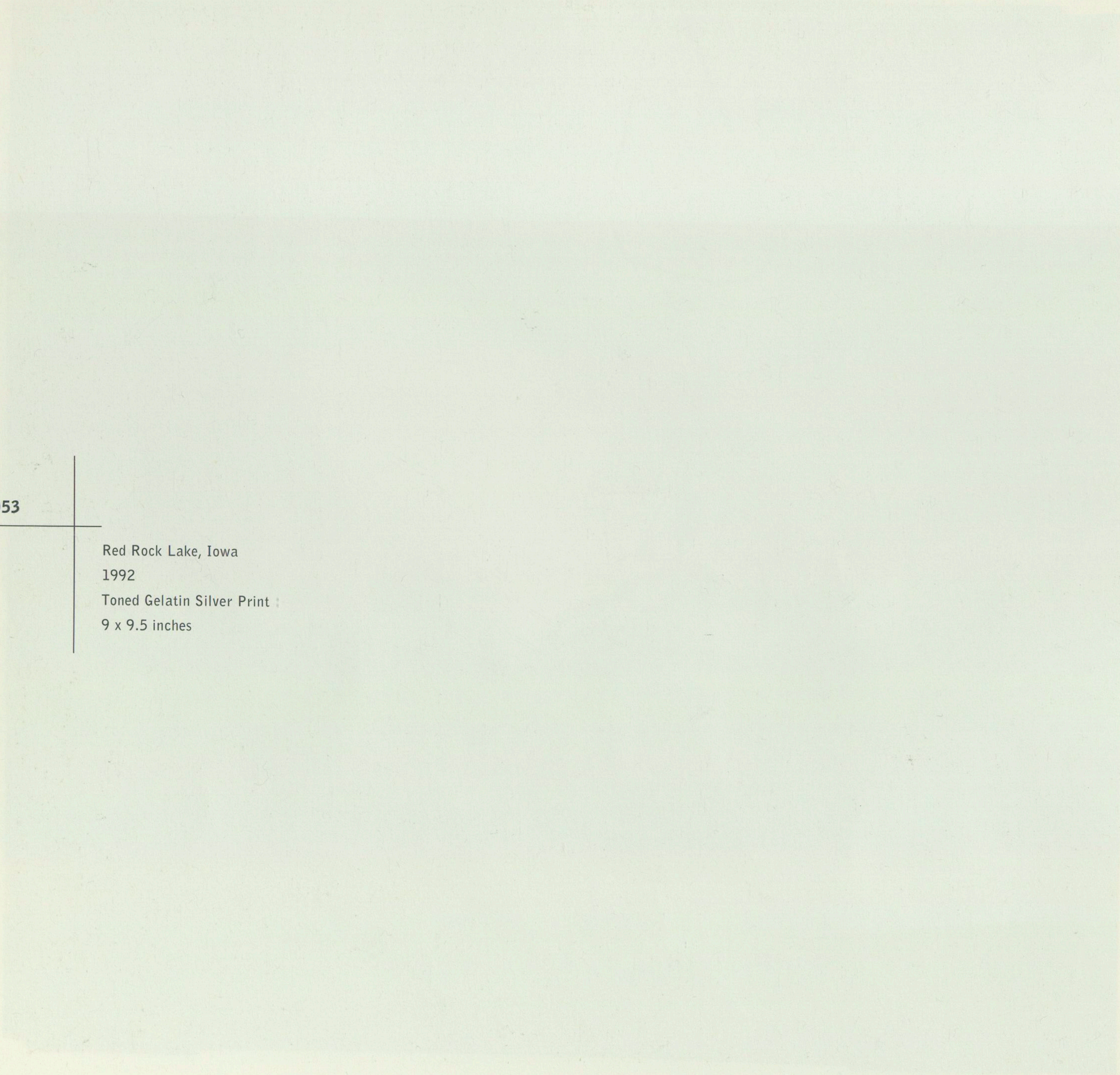
Untitled 078

Alcrtaz, Island, California
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches



Untitled 033

Washington,D.C.
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches



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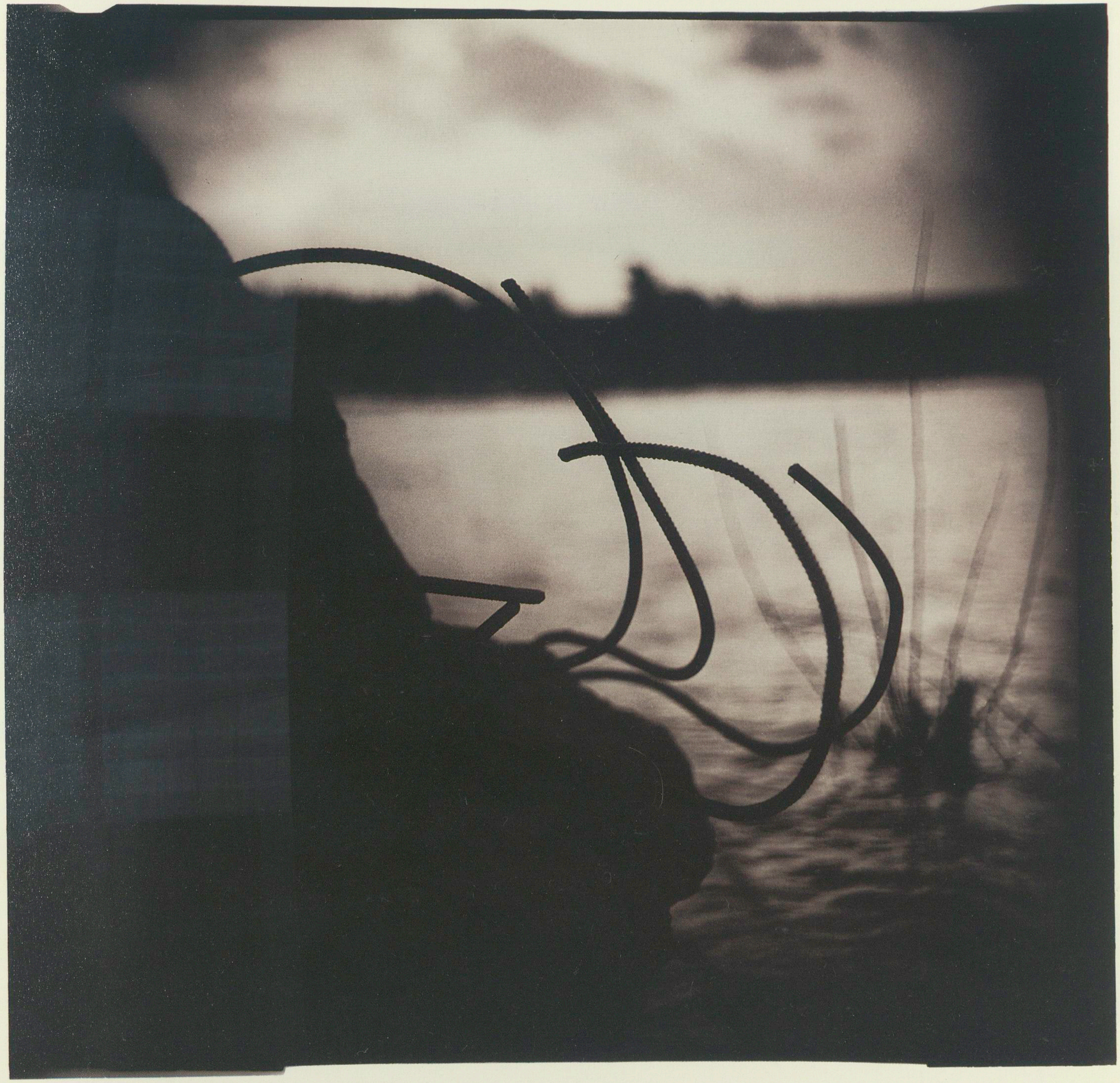
Red Rock Lake, Iowa
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches



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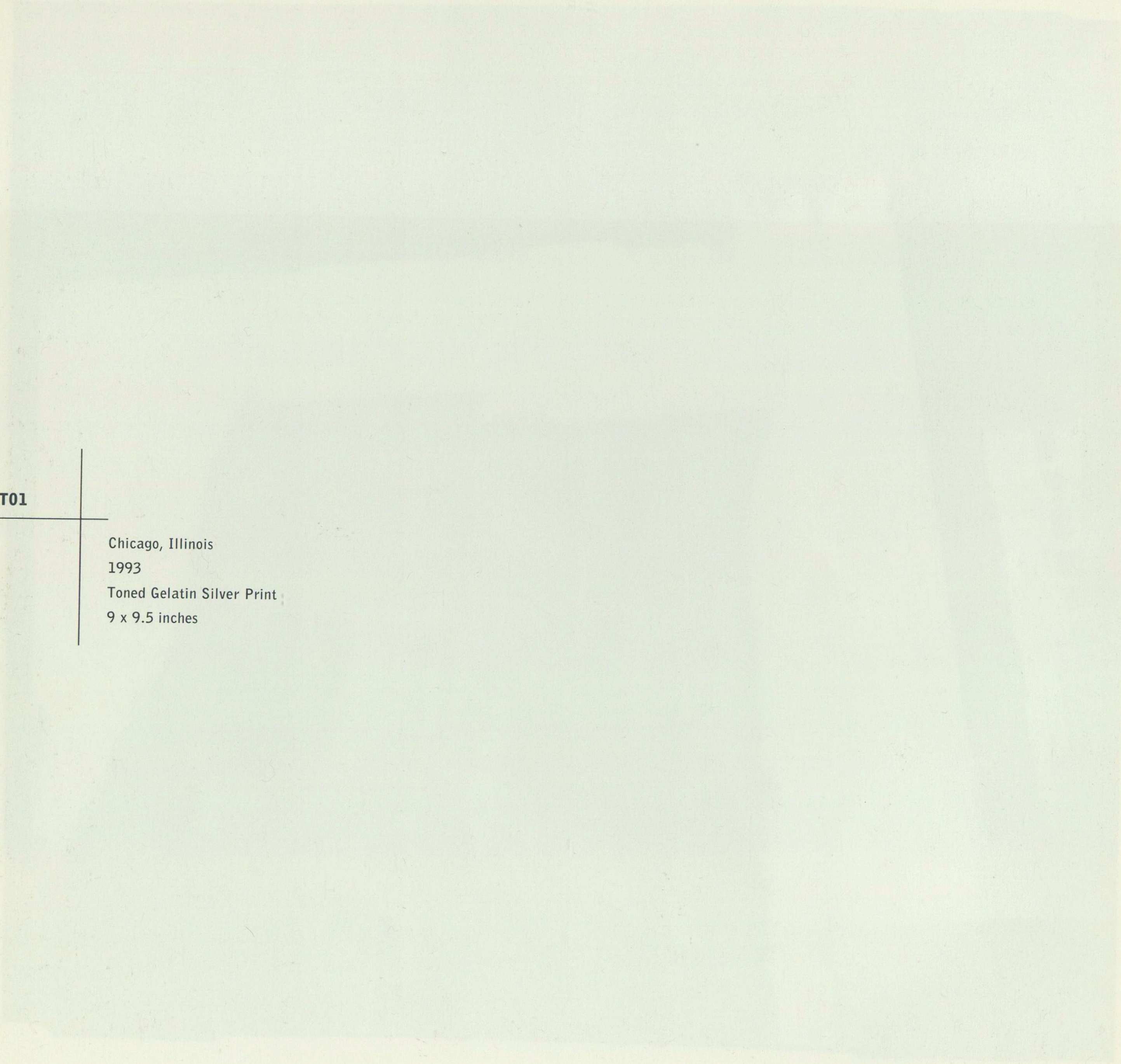
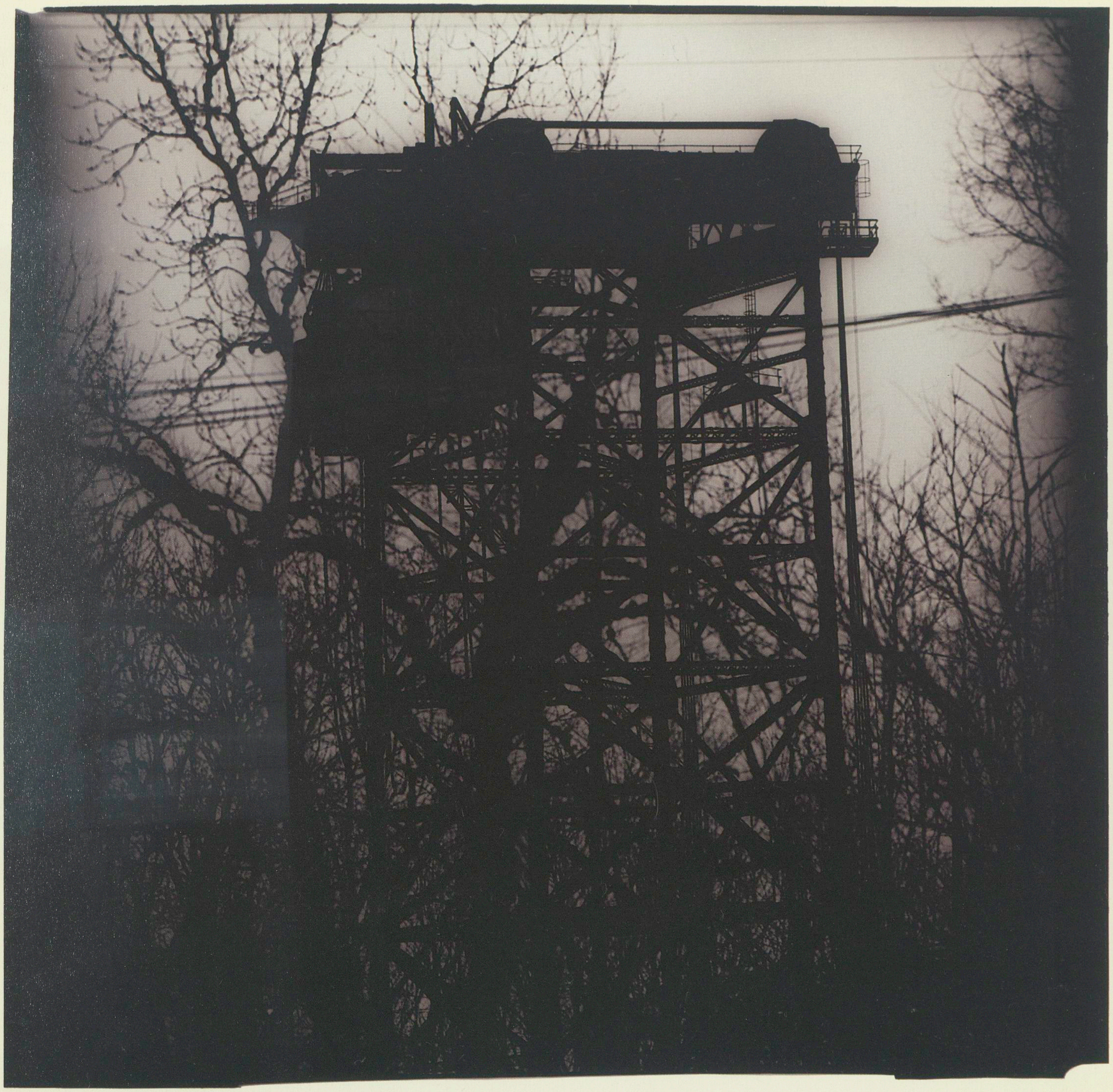
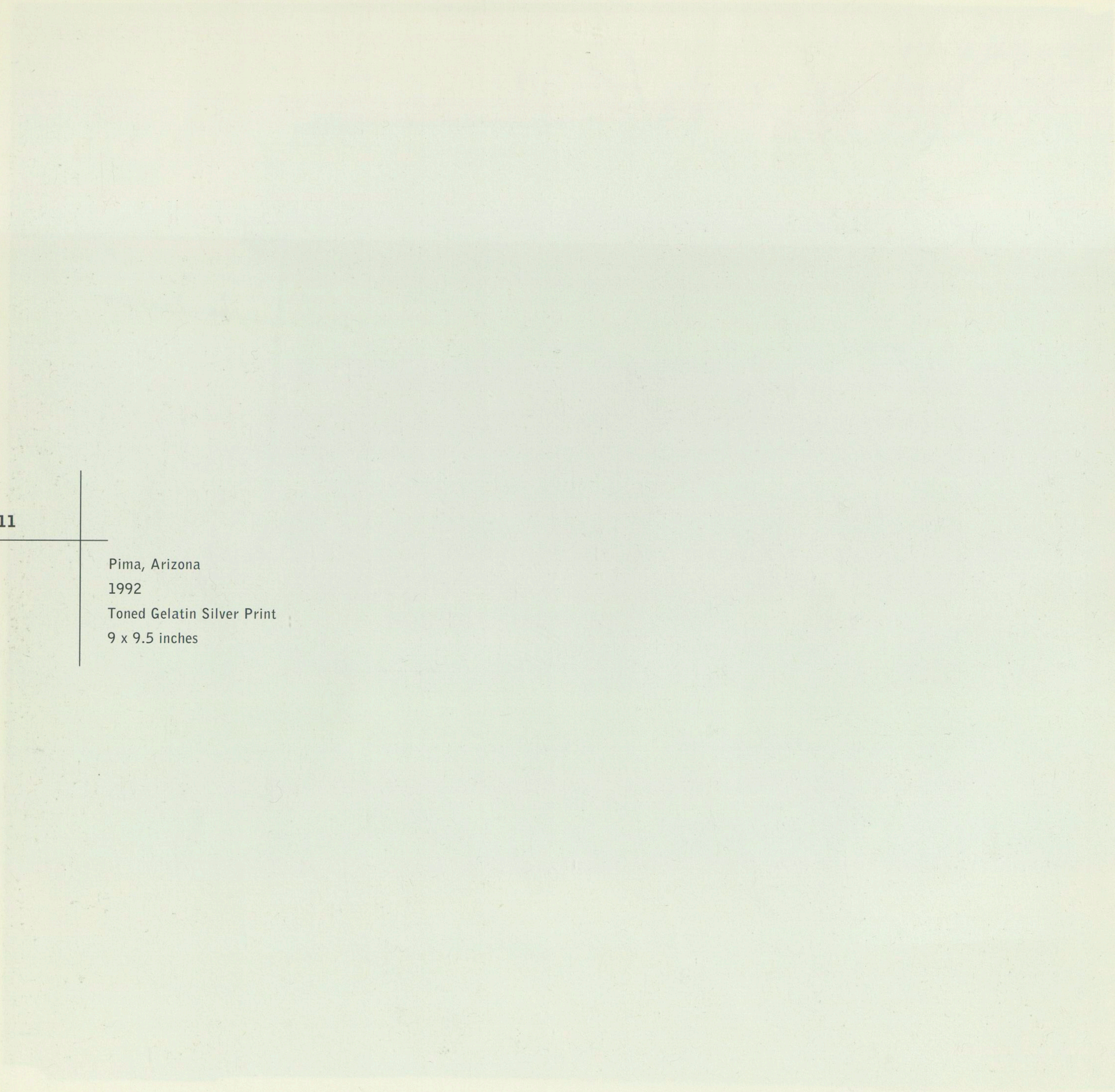
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches



Untitled CT01

Chicago, Illinois
1993
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches



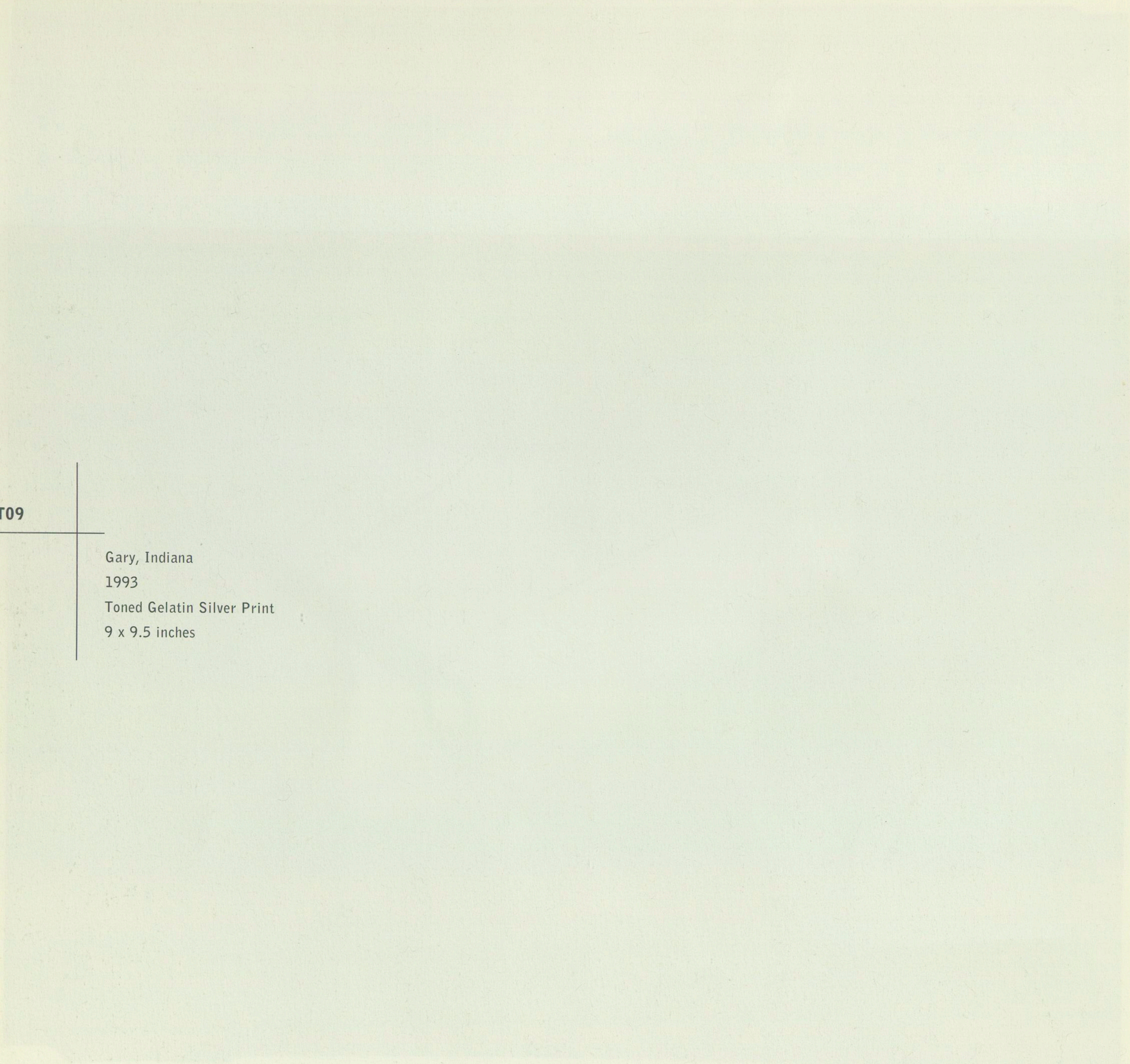


Untitled 011

Pima, Arizona
1992
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

Untitled CT09

Gary, Indiana
1993
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches



Untitled CT12

Gary, Indiana
1993
Toned Gelatin Silver Print
9 x 9.5 inches

Acknowledgments

Special Thanks to:
Robert Brinkmann
Jean Paul Nataf/Bremik Press

In memory of :
Russell Fee
John McMurry
David Ellis

The cover of this catalogue was
printed on 80lb Confetti Cover,
and the text on Quintessence 100lb

3 0500 01058 7973